

**Opening of the VIII Centenary  
 of the Canticle of the Creatures**  
*Sanctuary of San Damiano in Assisi, 11 January 2025*

On the 11th January, 2025, the VIII Centenary of the Canticle of the Creatures will officially open at the Sanctuary of San Damiano in Assisi. The Ministers General of the First Order and those of the Regular and Secular Third Order will be present, together with the President of the Conference of Franciscan Sisters.

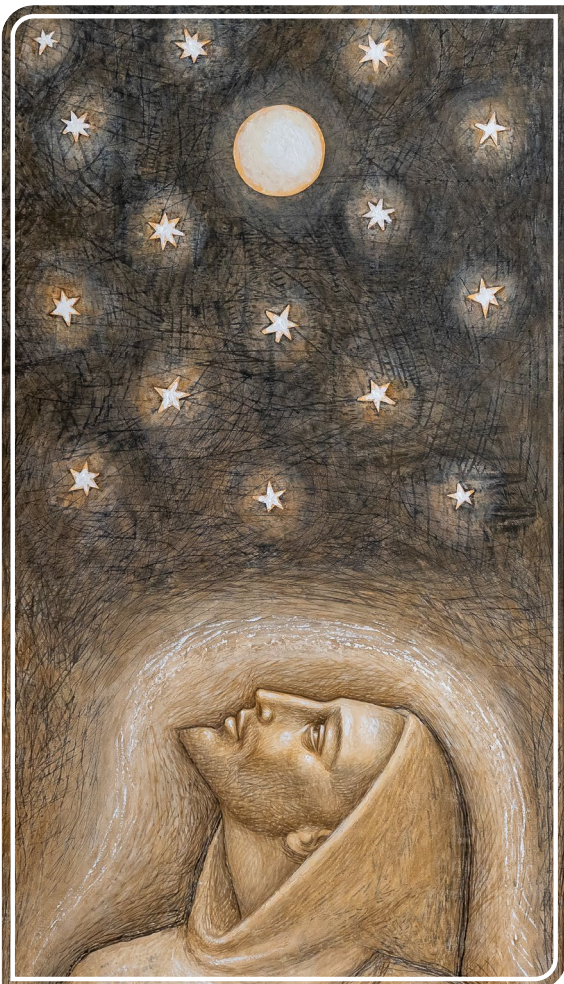
**Celebrating the Canticle of the Creatures  
 1225-2025**

Francis of Assisi was almost completely blind by the time he composed the Canticle of the Creatures. Nevertheless, with the eyes of faith, and filled with gratitude, he contemplated the wonders of creation and perceived the presence of the Creator who gave them meaning. To him, all creatures, mirrors of the divine perfection, were brothers and sisters because they were the work and gift of the same Author. Together they constituted the chorus of creation, which contemplates, praises and thanks God the Creator, “the Great Almsgiver” who gives generously and with goodness (2 Celano 77, FF 665)

The Canticle is the final expression and confession of the Poverello’s life. It summarizes his en-

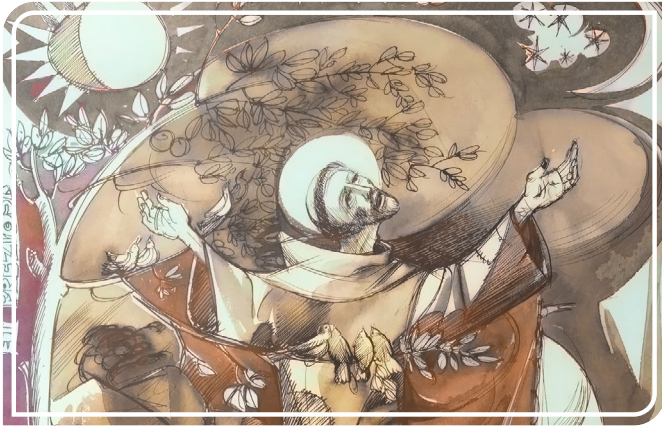


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tire journey of conformation to Christ, the beloved Son. His faith in the fatherhood of God becomes a song of praise that proclaims the brotherhood and the beauty of all creatures. In fact, “In beautiful things he contuited Beauty itself and through the footprints impressed in things he followed his Beloved everywhere, out of them all making for himself a ladder through which he could climb up to lay hold of Him who is utterly desirable” (Major Legend 9: 1, FF 1162).

### Celebrating as a Franciscan Family

Celebrating the Centenary of the Cantic of the Creatures as a Franciscan Family leads us to a radical change in our relationship with creation: we shift from possessing creation to caring for our common home. In fact, each one of us must respond sincerely to these questions: How do I want to live out my relationship with other creatures? As a ruler who claims the right to do what he wants with them? As a consumer of resources who sees them as an opportunity to be taken advantage of? Or as a brother who pauses before creation, who admires its beauty and safeguards its existence?

We are faced with an anthropological and ecological challenge that will determine our future, because it is linked to the future of our Mother and Sister Earth. We are called to face contemporary society and reintroduce “the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world” (Laudato si’ 11).

The current ecological crisis shows us that “the human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together” (Laudato si’ 48). This realization also allows us to understand that the human environment and the natural environment can, in the same way, protect and enhance each other. However, taking care of our common home without taking care of our interior home – our heart – will not work. We need conversion that is both ecological and integral at the same time, because “the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion” (Laudato si’ 217). In fact, the last verse of the Cantic reminds us that only those with open hearts, capable of disarming the mindset of hatred and revenge through forgiveness, can become instruments of reconciliation and harmony and offer a prophetic vision of fraternity, like Francis himself, who lived “in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself” (Laudato si’ 10).



## General Curia Agenda



- ☑ Up until the 23rd November, at the General Curia, the General Definitory will meet with the Presidents of the Conferences of Provincial Ministers.
- ☑ On the 23rd November, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General, will be in Bellegra (Italy) for the 25th anniversary of the canonization of St. Thomas of Cori.
- ☑ From the 24th –28th November the General Definitory will meet with the Bolivarian Conference in Bolivia. Afterwards, up until the 6th December, Br. Massimo and the Definitor General of the area, Br.

César Kulkamp, will visit the Missionary Province of St. Anthony.

- ☑ From the 25th to 28th November, Br. Fabio César Gomes, General Delegate *pro Monialibus*, will be in Cuenca (Spain), for the Assembly of the Spanish Federations of the Conceptionist Sisters; afterwards, until 4 December, he will be in Lisbon, Porto and Madeira to participate in the Meeting with the Portuguese Federation and visit some Monasteries of the Poor Clare Sisters of Portugal.

## Government of the Order



### Letter of the Minister General On the VIII World Day of the Poor and for the 5th Centenary of the Birth of St Benedict the Moor



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Dear brothers and sisters,  
*May the Lord give you peace!*

The fifth centenary of the birth of St Benedict the Moor (c. 1524-2024) deserves mention and remembrance. The flames of the devastating wildfires of July 29th, 2023, which severely damaged his incorrupt body, brought this anniversary to light. Benedict's sanctity is a sign of his passion for a life according to the originality of the Gospel, in the spirit of St Francis. Moreover, the Centenary of the Stigmata of St Francis reminds us how the Gospel of the Cross is the core of our vocation.



I will attempt to outline for you the inspiration behind three aspects of the life and witness of St Benedict the Moor – the way of the Gospel; the humble path taken by Christ; living with and among the poor. I do so specifically as we mark the 8th World Day of the Poor, dedicated to the cries and the prayer of the poor.

#### The Gospel frees from chains

Being the son of descendants of Ethiopian slaves, it is as a Black man that Benedict firstly speaks to us of the Gospel. According to the canon law and culture of the time, although born free by permission of a slave master, the stigma of being the son of slaves would never have allowed him to be considered holy or to belong to a Religious Order. In himself, he is a reminder that “there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28).

Read the full text of the Letter:

[Italiano](#) - [English](#) - [Español](#) - [Deutsch](#) - [Français](#) - [Hrvatski](#) - [Polski](#) - [Português](#)



## Visit of the Minister General to St. Anthony's College

*On the occasion of the beginning of the academic year*



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On the 7th November, the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, made a fraternal visit to St. Anthony's International College on the occasion of the beginning of the 2024-2025 academic year. This year 20 new friars joined the fraternity, for a total of 93 solemnly professed student friars of 33 nationalities, from 49 entities of the Order, who study in 13 different universities. Amongst the specialization courses they are following are, among others, Spiritual Theology, Canon Law, Sacred Scripture, Philosophy, Dogmatic Theology, Psychology.

The Rector Br. Angel Montoya and the Guardian of the fraternity, Br. Miljenko Šteko, are in charge of the animation and accompaniment of the students. This College helps the professional preparation of the friars, so that they can render a better service in formation or in the different missions and apostolates that the Order has in the world.

The meeting began with Vespers, followed by the Rector's words of welcome. Subsequently, Br. Massimo presented Br. Hieronimus Yoseph Dei Rupa, as his delegate to accompany this fraternity. Br. Hieronimus urged the students to do their best in their studies, without neglecting the fraternal life and prayer to which all Friars Minor are called.

In his speech, the Minister General gave a brief historical summary of the foundation of the College of St. Anthony, recalling that it was founded in the nineteenth century by Br. Bernardino del Vagol, Minister General of that time, who from its origins structured the College as a place of formation and professionalization of the friars, but also as a meeting point and union of the friars from the different Provinces. Br. Massimo added that today the College still carries out this function of creating bonds of fraternity and collaboration between the friars of the different Provinces.

This was followed by a dialogue between the students and the Minister General through a group dynamic, in which the students were able to share their expectations and reflect on the richness and challenges of living in this fraternity. Interculturality, fraternal relations, interprovinciality, responsibility, animation of small fraternities were some of the themes highlighted by the students.

At the end, Br. Massimo urged the students to take care of fraternal life and to study not only to memorize the contents, but to awaken in them a critical sense of reality.

## Academic Act for the Memory of Blessed John Duns Scotus

*Auditorium Antonianum, 11th November 2024*



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On Monday the 11th November 1, at the *Antonianum* Auditorium in Rome, the traditional Academic Act in honour of Blessed John Duns Scotus was held, organized by the Pontifical *Antonianum* University in collaboration with the Scotist Commission and the Italian Centre of Scotism (CIS).

The meeting was moderated by Br. Witold Salamon. After the words of greeting from the Rector Magnificus of the PUA, Br. Agustín Hernández Vidales, and the annual report of Br. Josip Percan,



President of the Scotist Commission, Dr. Andrea Nannini of the Institute of the History of Theology spoke, with a report entitled “*Freedom and contingency: metaphysical reflections starting from Lectura and Ordinatio, I, d. 39*”, in which the theme of freedom and contingency is mentioned. There are two different levels of contingency: diachrony and synchrony. The first is an Aristotelian concept according to which the will can be directed towards opposite objects in successive instants, in succession. Duns Scotus’ synchronic contingency, on the other hand, derives from the freedom of the will and means that the will that wants “x” at the instant “t” may not want it “x” at the same time “t”. According to Scotus, only the will is the principle of contingency in a synchronic sense, since only the will is *potentia ad opposita simul*. Duns Scotus’ free will means a contingent action that comes from the unity of power and logical power.

Afterwards, Prof. Luca Parisoli, Scientific Director of the CIS, addressed the theme “*Minimum considerations on Scotism*”.

The event was brought to its conclusion by Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General of the OFM and Grand Chancellor of the PUA, who in his speech “*Hope, an arduous virtue to cross a dramatic time*”, analyzed the importance of the theological virtue that is the object of the upcoming Jubilee, which in fact invites us to be pilgrims of hope.

Br. Massimo recalled how Duns Scotus speaks of hope in his comments on the Sentences (*Lectura and Ordinatio*). “It is not only a theological virtue, but part of a spiritual dynamism that unites the human being to the love of God through desire, before on the cognitive level. It thus places him in a condition of trust and expectation in divine grace, oriented towards the goal of definitive beatitude”, adding then “that hope seems to be, for Dr. Sottile, that virtue that “binds together the theological virtues, located in the powers of the soul of the believer. It is also thanks to it, in fact, that the Chris-



tian remains a pilgrim: always on the move and in search, even when he finds himself uncertain and precisely for this reason a beggar for hope”.

But why call it an “arduous” virtue? Retracing the thought of Duns Scotus, the Minister General underlined how hope, for us Christians, refers to the love of God, to the expectation of the resurrection of the dead, to the ultimate goal that leads us to walk in life. So today, in a secularized world, it becomes truly difficult to take care of peace, justice and disarmament; of dialogue between people; of the common home; of democracy as participation and passion for relationships, respectful of differences and never exhausted from seeking what unites. “The urgency of these ‘arduous’ realities gives us the measure of the urgency of hope. This is not a passive consolation, but an active responsibility to make room for the power of the Gospel in the current conditions, in active expectation of the fulfillment of God’s promises,” said Br. Massimo.

In conclusion, the Grand Chancellor highlighted the importance of study and research in cultivating the reasons for hope, with the most solid roots, to consolidate paths and new practices of hope.

Read the full text of the Minister General’s speech ([Italiano](#))

## Solemn Professions

17th September, Prov. St. James of Compostela (Spain)

Br. Leonardo Rafael Rosas Salazar, Br. Omar Alexandre Pérez Gómez

5th October, Prov. St. Francis (Kenya)

Br. Gerald Niwagaba, Br. Deogratias Niwagira

1st November, Prov. Holy Name of Jesus (Brazil)

Br. Carlos Antônio Pereira, Br. Marcelo da Silva Gonçalves, Br. Murilo de Souza Guimarães, Br. Evilásio Souza da Silva, Br. João Victor Tessarollo Mota

*Information received from the General Secretariat*



## Visit of the Minister General to the Province of the Holy Cross *Bosnia Argentina, 24th – 31st October 2024*



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From the 24th to 31st October, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General of the OFM, visited the Province of the Holy Cross in Bosnia and Argentina.

On the first day, he visited the convent in Visoko, where he also met the friars of the convent in Kraljeva Sutjeska. After the greetings of the Guardian, Mass was celebrated, in which Br. Massimo gave the homily. During the fraternal meeting, important issues for Franciscan life were discussed. Subsequently, a visit to the friary followed and, in the afternoon, individual interviews with the friars. On the way to Sarajevo, the Minister General visited the parish of Banbrdo.

On the 26th October he met with the friars of Sarajevo at the Faculty of Franciscan Theology. After the meeting and greetings from the Guardian, he presided over the celebration of Mass. Subsequently, during the meeting with the friars in formation, the Minister General explained to them the situation of the Order and his visions for the future, followed by individual discussions. In the evening, an interreligious meet-

ing, *The Spirit of Assisi*, was held in Sarajevo in the church of St. Anthony, during which the Minister General gave a speech to the participants.

On Sunday, the 27th October, Br. Massimo visited the friary of Kraljeva Sutjeska, where the 600th anniversary of the birth of Bosnian Queen Katarina Kotromanić was celebrated. Mass was presided over by the Provincial of Bosnia and Argentina, with the concelebration of the Minister General and the Provincial of the South Slavic Conference (SLAS). In his homily, the Minister General expressed his joy at being able to preach, as the friars of Rome guard the tomb of the queen. In the afternoon, the Minister General met first with the Provincial Ministers and then with the Provincial Council.

On the 28th October, a visit to the friary of Tolisa followed, where the friars of the friaries of Tuzla, Dubrave, Plehan, Belgrade and Zagreb also met. After the greetings of the Guardian, the Minister General learned about the history of the friary and the church, deepening the tradi-

tions with a visit to the museum. During the meeting, he shared with the friars his experiences with confreres from all over the world, illustrating similarities and differences with the Province of Argentine Bosnia. He encouraged the friars to rediscover the values of common life and to promote life in simplicity. This was followed by the celebration of Mass, during which Br. Massimo gave the homily. In the afternoon, there was the possibility of individual interviews.

On the 29th October, it was the turn of the friary of the Holy Spirit in Fojnica, where the friars of the friaries of Fojnica, Kreševo and Sutjeska gathered. After the greetings of the Guardian, the Minister General thanked the friars for their testimony of the Franciscan charism through the centuries and for their closeness to the people; after Mass, he made himself available for personal meetings.

On the same day he visited the convent of the Poor Sisters in Brestovsko, where during the Mass the vesting of two postulants took place. The Eucharistic



celebration was presided over by the Minister Provincial, Br. Zdravko Dadić, while the homily was given by the Minister General.

On the 30th October, Br. Massimo met with the friars of the friaries of Guča Gora and Jajce in Guča Gora. After the greetings of the Guardian and the presentation of the friars, the Minister General's intervention followed, enriched by fraternal dialogue. During the Holy Mass, Br. Massimo also delivered the homily. On the same day, accompanied by the Minister Provincial, he visit-

ed the Franciscan monastery in Rama-Šćit, where he briefly met with the Guardian and the friars.

On the last day of the fraternal visit, the 31st October, the Minister General visited the friars of the Franciscan friary of Gorica – Livno. The meeting was also attended by friars from the friaries of Rama, Petrićevac and nearby Dalmatia.

After the greetings of the Guardian, Br. Massimo Fusarelli spoke about the situation in the Order, offering the friars the opportunity

to ask questions. Mass was presided over by Msgr. Marko Semren OFM, Bishop emeritus, while the homily was delivered by the Minister General. The whole afternoon was dedicated to individual talks with the friars, while in the evening Br. Massimo also met with the novices of the Province.

With the meeting at the convent of Gorica, the Minister General concluded his fraternal visit to the Province of the Holy Cross – Argentine Bosnia.

*By the Provincial Secretariat*

## Condolences and solidarity with the Fraternity of the Holy Spirit in Spain

*The friars were attacked by a man*

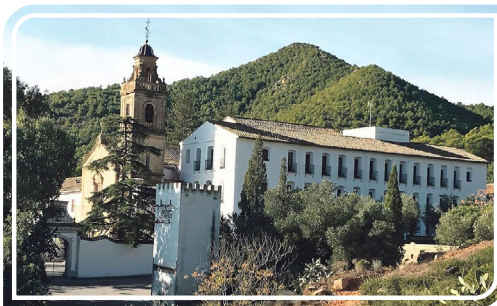


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The Order expresses deep condolences and fraternal closeness to the community of friars of *Santo Spirito del Monte in Gilet* (Valencia, Spain), attacked on the 9th November 2024 by a man who broke into the friary and hit the friars with a blunt object.

Four brothers were injured, one of whom, immediately in very serious condition, returned to the Father's House two days later.

Both the Civil Guard and the Local Police of Gilet are working on the investigation and search for the attacker to clarify the facts and



ensure the safety of the community. The Province of the Immaculate Conception, in the words of the Minister Provincial, Br. Joaquín Zurera Ribó, reaffirms its commitment to the pastoral and social work that the Franciscans have carried out in the friary of the Holy Spirit over the years, trusting that, through prayer and peace, these difficult moments can be overcome.

The Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, joins in the prayer for the victims of the attack by inviting all the friars of the Order to do the same.

## Deceased Brothers

- † 11th November: Br. Juan Antonio Llorente Espín, Prov. Immaculate Conception (Spain)
- † 10th November: Br. John Bernard Maganzini, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)
- † 9th November: Br. Leonard Cornelius and Br. Marcel Groth, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)
- † 4th November: Br. Paul Juniet, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)
- † 29th October: Br. Guillermo Grajera Pinilla, Prov. Immaculate Conception (Spain)

- † 23rd October: Br. Antonio Abanto Latorre, Prov. XII Apostoles (Peru)
- † 17th October: Br. Alfred Tabone, Prov. St. Paul the Apostle (Malta)
- † 25th September: Br. Vittorino Serrao, Prov. Holy. VII Martyrs of Calabria (Italy)
- † 17th September: Br. Ivan Ćurić, Prov. Holy Cross (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

*Information received from the General Secretariat*



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## Chapter of the Province of the Immaculate Conception of Brazil

### *New Provincial Definitory elected*



From the 4th-12th November 2024, more than 100 friars from the five states (Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Paraná and Santa Catarina) in which the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception of Brazil is present gathered at the Santo Antônio Seminary, in Agudos (SP) to participate in the 2024 Intermediate Provincial Chapter. Oriented on the theme “Revise, update and proclaim” and on the motto “Marked by love, pilgrims of hope”, the capitulars reflect on three key themes such as Formation, Evangelization and Economy and Administration.

This Intermediate Chapter celebrated in the middle of the mandate of the current Minister Provincial, Br. Paulo Roberto Pereira, has the objective of reviewing the work done in the first three years, implementing the policies and mandates approved in the last elective chapter. It is also a time to review the Province’s Plan of Evangelization and reflect on how the priorities taken on have actually been implemented by the Fraternities and works.

On the first day of activities, Br. Claudino Gilz, coordinator of the event’s Organizing Committee, said that the Chapter “is a time to listen to the Lord, but also to listen to our brothers and sisters

with their stories.” The Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, wrote a letter to the Chapter friars. The text bore the mark of a brother with a deep sense of care and closeness, highlighting elements perceived firsthand after his visit to the Province last year.

The Minister General encouraged us to work to have a Province that can mature in the habit of healthy alternation of tasks, in view of the creative renewal of new perspectives and mentalities; to mature also in fraternal trust in which the sharing of gifts and income strengthens the commitment to poverty and fraternity; to overcome every spirit of competition and division born of individualism and the search for security, so that brothers and sisters can discern new paths in fidelity to those they have embraced and, together, take steps.

The activity of the Chapter friars alternates between celebrations and devotional moments and debates on delicate issues concerning the administration of goods, the care of the elderly friars, who today are the majority in the Province, as well as vocations, ongoing formation and service to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), as well as Evangelization with young people.

On Sunday, the 10th November, the Chapter friars elected the six Definitors who will form the new government of the Province for the next three years (2025-2027): they are the Robson brothers Luiz Scudela, Daniel Dellandrea, Diego Atalino de Melo, Volney José Berkenbrock, Gilberto da Silva, Gilson Krammer.

The Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception is present in Brazil and Angola. At the provincial level, the animation and coordination of the life and mission of the friars is carried out by the Minister Provincial, Br. Paulo Roberto Pereira, together with the Vicar Provincial, Br. Gustavo Wayand Medella and the Provincial Definitors.

*The article is the work of Br. Elias Hebo Luís, Br. Rodrigo da Silva Santos and Adriana Rabelo*

## Chapters of Mats



**Chapter of Mats of the Province  
of St. Michael the Archangel, Indonesia**  
*Living the Franciscan Charism, Communion,  
and Mission in a Changing World*



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The Chapter of Mats in the Province of St. Michael the Archangel, Indonesia, was held from November 4-9, 2024, at the Vitra Ballroom-Kramat, Central Jakarta. This Chapter was attended by the Guardians, the Definitories, the President and the Council of the Foundation of St. Antony de Lisboa Timor Leste, the Province Councils and Commissions, the JPIC Director of Indonesia, and the formator representatives. Discussions were held at the guardianates level with invited speakers from the Secular Franciscan Order, the Third Order Regular, and the Lay Catholics. Participants brought the results of their guardianates level to the Province Chapter of Mats.

This Chapter was opened by the Minister Provincial, Br. Mikhael Peruhe OFM. In his address, Br. Mike read the letter from the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli OFM, regarding his visitation to Indonesia and Timor Leste in August 2024. Br. Mike emphasized that several messages from the Minister General also could inspire the brothers in this Chapter. He also stated that this Chapter was a graced opportunity for the brothers to make discernment about the shape of their lives as Friars Minor who working in Indonesia and Timor

Leste, based on the theme “Living the Franciscan Charism, Communion, and Mission in a Changing World.”

Three resource persons were present to provide input. They are Sr. Bernadeta Budi Juliati FMM, Angela Oktavia Suryani OFS, and Francisia Saveria Ery Seda. Based on the input from these three resource persons and the collective reflections of the brothers at the guardianates level, the brothers engaged in a shared reflection using the “*world café*” method in the spirit of synodality. Through this method and synodal spirit, the brothers sought to listen to one another, offer mutual support, identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, and propose concrete actions for their mission and service as Friars Minor. The formulations resulting from these reflections and shared discussions serve as critical notes and a strategic guide for the brothers to continue nurturing and living the Franciscan Charism, Communion, and Mission in response to the challenges of the modern world with concrete and sustainable actions based on the current context of a changing world.

*Br. Jimmy Hendrik Rance Tnomat, OFM*





## Animation of the Order

### Meeting of the New Forms of Presence, Life and Evangelization General Curia, November 3-7



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What is really new about the *New Forms* as we have come to know them in our Order?

With input from our Minister General Br Massimo Fusarelli and Br Miran Spelič of the Holy Cross Province in Slovenia, a certain “*inquietudine sana*” to answer this question emerged as nineteen friars from Slovenia, Czech republic, Poland, Italy, France, Austria, Germany, Spain, Ireland, Holland and Hungary came together for a third time in the General Curia from November 3th-7th to share experiences and discern how to move forward together in living of *New Forms of Presence, Life and Evangelization*.

Last year the theme of “Fraternitas” was used as a guide to our discussions and this year we chose the theme of “Minoritas” and Br Miran to lead us on this theme in the afternoon of day one.

He pointed out that St Francis chose “Minoritas”, a descent in his relatively high-born status, and allowed the subsequent movement he inspired to be subsumed by the hierarchical institutional church: this was a gift for the Church at the time.

Br Miran suggested to us to look inwards to the admonitions and outwards to the signs of the times to see how to be minors in the Church of today through our *New Forms of Presence, Life and Evangelization*. He invited us to be concrete, looking at our relationships with “things”, or how to be minors in areas that we find ourselves such media (are we influencers, and if so what kind?) or minors in economy, education, science, art...in the Church.

These points were also taken up the following day in Br Massimo’s talk. Admitting that the New Forms often imply different things to different fraternities, and embracing the fact that we represented quite multiform fraternities, he invited us to resist the temptation not to move, but rather to look to the signs of the times and then discern together how we might incarnate our call to live new forms in spreading the Gospel in the Church and the World of today!

Quoting our late beloved Minister General, Br Giacomo Bini, that used to say that our time is a

“time of signs”, Br Massimo invited us to see how the New Forms of Franciscan Presence, Life and Evangelisation can be *signs for* our time: for our Order, for the Church and for larger society.

Naturally this evoked many responses and discussions from the friars gathered. Do we look again at simplicity; at making concrete uniform decisions about things

such as the employment of staff or our relationship with money? Do we look seriously at the buildings we inhabit; is there a specific type of building that is more suited to new forms of life?

Do we for example take the form of Torre Angela, a small community living very simply in a rented accommodation in a deprived part of Rome, where we had a magnificent and very illuminating visit to on day three? Or of El Palancar, the small self-sustaining Alcantarine friary in Spain focusing on providing space for prayer? Or of Hertogenbosch, in The Netherlands, Popping in Austria, Nazarje in Slovenia, big traditional friaries, where the dimin-



ishing number of friars decided to live together with lay people and religious sisters also dedicated to a simple Franciscan way of life and from this a New Form of Presence and Evangelization emerge? Or of the many other equally diverse fraternities mentioned above?

In the end it was difficult to narrow down shared expectations and visions. We decided we will continue to meet annually - next year in Popping in Austria - and to endeavour to become more and more connected to each other through social media groups chats and also through fraternal visits to each other throughout the year.

As one friar said as the final deliberations dragged on, we are forms of life and we can only really understand each of the forms of life by living them together, by sharing our lived experiences with each other. From here we may actually move closer to discerning what New Forms can be in our Order in relation to the traditional forms of life and how we wish to incarnate them in a common concrete way.

*Br. Ronan Sharpley, OFM*

Read the message of the Minister General  
([Italiano](#))



## Beatification of Venerable Luigi Palić OFM and Gjon Gazulli

*Shkodra (Albania), 16th November 2024*



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The Prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, His Eminence Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, representing the Holy Father, presided over the rite of beatification of Venerable Luigi Palić (Albanian: Paliq), professed priest of the Order of Friars Minor, martyr, and Venerable Gjon Gazulli, diocesan priest, martyr, in the Cathedral of Shkodra, Albania, on Saturday, the 16th November, 2024.

The Causes of the two Servants of God began in 2002, when the rediscovered freedom of worship in Albania allowed the Church to instruct the processes of recognition of the martyrdom of some victims of religious persecution during the twentieth century.

The first group to reach the Beatification, on November 5, 2016, was that of Blessed Vincent Prenushi OFM, Archbishop of Durrës, and his XXXVII Companions. The new beatification concerns a friar minor and a diocesan priest who heroically sealed their faith in Christ and in the Church with the sacrifice of their lives, respectively in the year 1913 and in the year 1927.

Read the biography of the Blesseds on [www.ofm.org](http://www.ofm.org)



## News from the Entities

### Ongoing formation meeting for Guardians and Superiors

*Kalwaria Zebrzydowska (Poland), November 4-7*



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On the 4th to 7th of November 2024 in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska (Poland) took place the ongoing formation Workshops for Guardians and Superiors of religious houses of five Polish Provinces of the Order of Friars Minor.

The meeting was organized by the Secretariat for Formation and Studies of the North Slavic Conference, headed by Br. Samuel Cegłowski OFM.



It was a good opportunity of prayer, integration and exchange of experiences, but also spiritual and intellectual formation. Lectures for over 100 friars were given by:

- Br. Wojciech Bartnicki SSCC: “Styles of leadership in the community” and “How to live with a difficult brother?”
- Dr Danuta Piekarczyk: “Giving yourself - the sacrifice of Christ and ours”
- Br. Łukasz Buksa OFM: “Culture of destruction: analysis of contemporary processes of moral and cultural destruction in the context of Christian values” and “Digital technologies and their impact on the development of spiritual life. Interdisciplinary approach”
- Br. Krzysztof Dyrek SJ: “The role and function of the superior in building community”.

On the last day, meetings were held in provincial groups with their Ministers provincial.

### The 500 years of the Franciscan presence in Michoacán in Mexico

*Opening of the Jubilee Year*



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Last Monday, the 21st October 2021, in the old former friary of San Francis, in the legendary city of *Tzintzuntzan*, Michoacán, ancient capital of the *Purépecha Kingdom*, the opening of the Jubilee Year was held, which commemorates the Fifth Centenary of the arrival of Br. Martín de la Coruña and his companions to this portion of the Mexican territory. where the Franciscan Province of the Apostles Peter and Paul of Michoacán, in Mexico, was born.

In the face of such an important event for the life of the Province and for the local Church, the Franciscans of Michoacán gathered in this place so symbolic to their history, because there is the memory of those holy men, sons of the Poor Man of Assisi, who spent their lives announcing the



Good News of Jesus to the native peoples of this region. and whose bodies still rest in this place.

This great celebration was attended by the Friars Minor, the Poor Clares, the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, the Secular Franciscans and the people of *Tzintzuntzan*, to give thanks to God, through the Eucharist, for the wonders he has worked throughout these five centuries.

The homily was preached by the Provincial Minister, Br. Enrique Muñoz Gutiérrez, OFM, who invited those present to be grateful to God, who brought to this place the message of salvation, making use of a generation of evangelical men, who detached themselves from everything and came to these lands. He said: *“They were sent, first by Jesus and then by their superiors, to sow the Good News in the land of lakes and mountains,*

*in the land of fishermen.”* In his speech, the Minister also recalled the works that Br. Martín de la Coruña, Founding Father of this Province, Br. Maturino Gilberti, Br. Jacobo Daciano and other friars who began the mission in this holy place, and which remained throughout history a source of evangelization and culture.

After Mass and a fraternal meal, the friars left Tzintzuntzan, the fruitful centre of this Province, and returned to their friaries in Guanajuato, Querétaro, Chihuahua and Texas, along with a new desire to be better than yesterday, grateful to history, to their ancestors, to this city and its people for reminding them that it is worth giving one’s life for the proclamation of the Gospel; for *when you sow generously, you will reap abundantly afterwards.*

*By the Provincial Secretariat*

## 100 years of Msgr. Serafín Cartagena OFM Bishop emeritus of Zamora, Ecuador



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On the occasion of the 100th birthday of Msgr. Serafín Cartagena OFM, Bishop Emeritus of Zamora, Ecuador, the Minister General of the Order, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, [addressed a letter to his brother](#) who is just one hundred years old.

Br. Massimo met him in person during his fraternal visit last June and dedicates words of sincere affection to him: “Your joyful presence amongst the friars and the other members of the People of God constitutes

a living memory that our vocation to service never ends, but rather adapts through the various phases of our lives”, reads the text, which concludes with a thanksgiving: “Thank you for the service of your word, your smile, your patience, your prayer”.

Br. Serafín was born on the 7th November, 1924 in Tixán, Province of Chimborazo, Ecuador. He completed his primary, secondary and diaconal studies at the Franciscan Seminary in Quito. He was ordained a priest on the 1st April, 1951 and in December of the same year he went as a missionary to Zamora Chinchipe, in the only parish that was Cumbaratza, which covered a very large area of the region.

Pope John Paul II appointed him Apostolic Prefect of the Galapagos Islands on the 17th May, 1980. On the 10th September 1982 he was appointed Apostolic Vicar of Zamora and Titular Bishop of Gibba. The Apostolic Nuncio to Ecuador, Msgr. Vincenzo Maria

Farano, ordained him Bishop on the 2nd February, 1983. On the 1st February 2003 the Pope himself accepted request for retirement, with effect from the 27th March of the same year.

### Music Festival



On 26th October 2024, in the Church Convent of saints Peter and Paul (Bosnia and Erzegovina), the exhibition on 25th Anniversary Music Festival of the Franciscan Youth – FramaFest, took place.

It had the motto “It is not me who lives, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2, 20). The Jubilee brought together 840 youth coming from 29 local fraternities of Franciscan youth (FRAMA) in Bosnia and Erzegovina and beyond the Croatian fraternity.



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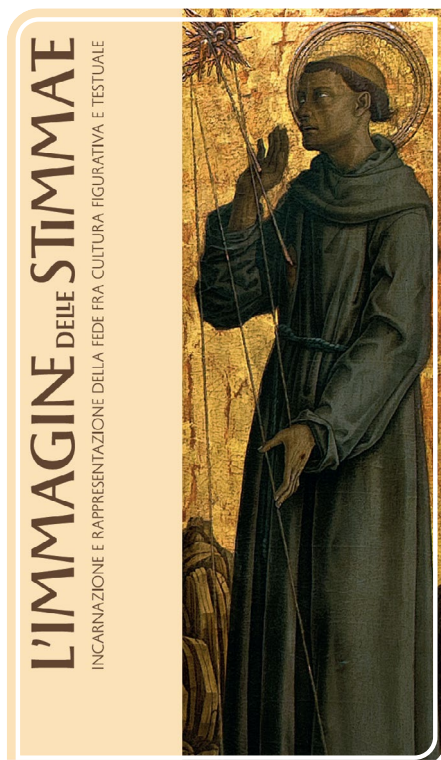
## OFM in the World

### The image of the Stigmata

*International conference in Falconara Marittima (Italy),  
from 21 to 23 November*



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In the context of the celebrations for the eighth centenary of the Stigmata of St. Francis, from the 21st to 23rd November in Falconara Marittima, Italy, the international conference “The image of the Stigmata. Incarnation and representation of faith between figurative and textual culture”. The event is hosted at the headquarters of the historical-Franciscan and Picene Library of the city and is organized by the Archival Pinacoteca Library of the Order of Friars Minor of the Marche, directed by Br. Lorenzo Turchi OFM, in collaboration with the Pontifical University Antonianum, the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage of the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and the Department of Ancient and Modern Civilizations of the University of Messina.

The organizers want to promote a multidisciplinary meeting to investigate the relationship established between iconographic representations and textual traditions that conveyed the image of the Stigmata between the fourteenth and twentieth centuries. The occasion is also proposed as a moment of shared reflection on themes, research approaches and methodologies of investigation.

It will be possible to follow the sessions of the conference remotely on the [YouTube channel of the Piceno Franciscan Library](#).

### The sanctity of intelligence:

### Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas 750 years later

*International conference in Rome, 5-7 December*



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The international conference “The Holiness of Intelligence: Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas 750 Years Later” will be held in Rome from 5 to 7 December, organized by the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical University *Antonianum*, the Vatican Apostolic Library, the French Embassy to the Holy See, the *École Française* in Rome, the *Leonine* Commission and the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas.

The session of 5 December will be held in the *École Française* in Rome and in the Vatican Apostolic Library; the session of 6 December will take place at the Pontifical University *Antonianum* and the session of the 7th December at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas.



[Download the program](#)



## The Treasure of the Holy Land

On display at the Marino Marini Museum in Florence (Italy)



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Up until the 7th January, 2025, the city of Florence (Italy) hosts the exhibition “The Treasure of the Holy Land at the Marino Marini Museum. The beauty of the sacred: the Medici Altar and the gifts of the Kings”, which traces the history of Christianity and reveals over 500 years of devotion and sacred beauty.

For the first time in Italy, in the church of San Pancrazio, 108 works are on display, mostly from the Terra Sancta Museum in Jerusalem, which houses the Treasure of the Holy Sepulchre. The exhibition, enriched by loans from Italian museums and private collections, traces the complex intertwining of patronage and religious worship, guiding visitors on a fascinating journey through the centuries, the genius of artistic creation and the spirituality that helped shape the cultural roots of the Christian West.

Religious objects, jewels, ornaments and sacred vestments, codices and canopies, which over the centuries have been preserved by the Franciscan friars and are now under the protection of the Custody of the Holy Land. At the end of the event they will return to Jerusalem for the establishment of the Terra Sancta Museum Art and History, in the friary of St. Saviour.

Br. Francesco Patton OFM, Custos of the Holy Land, underlined how “in the last 20 years the Christian communities of Jerusalem have started a general movement towards the enhancement of their heritage: archives, libraries, inventories, restorations and documentation, with the intention of establishing Christian history and identity in a place where their presence is openly diminished”. The Holy City, in fact, already houses a Jewish museum and one of Islamic arts, while a Christian one is missing: from there the idea of the Terra Sancta Museum project was born: “It is more precisely a network of museums, including the Terra Sancta Museum - Archaeology, located in the sanctuary of the Flagellation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Terra Sancta Museum - Art and History, still under construction, at the friary of St. Saviour,” said the Custos.

Regarding the Ornament, that is, the Altar that was donated at the end of the sixteenth century by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinando I de' Medici, to the Holy Sepulchre and now on display at the

13.09.2024  
07.01.2025

IL TESORO DI TERRASANTA  
AL MUSEO MARINO MARINI  
La bellezza del sacro: l'Altare dei Medici e i doni dei Re

Museo Marino Marini  
Piazza San Pancrazio, Firenze  
www.museomarinomarini.it

MM Museo Marino Marini  
Comunicazione di Terra Santa  
Terra Sancta Museum  
REGIONE TOSCANA  
COMUNE DI FIRENZE

Marino Marini Museum, Br. Francesco commented: “I like to think that this work unites the Church and to be able to admire it there is no more beautiful setting than Calvary, the place where Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself for the salvation of all. This is also the meaning of our presence as Franciscan religious: to be present for everyone, and even more so in these difficult times. The hope is that this exhibition and the Terra Sancta Museum in Jerusalem will be places to bring people together. In this Holy Land afflicted by hatred and division, it is necessary to build bridges, propose new initiatives, open horizons. This hope is part of our Christian identity and is released precisely from the empty tomb of the Risen Christ.”

*The Treasure of the Holy Land at the Marino Marini Museum. The beauty of the sacred: the Medici Altar and the gifts of the Kings.*

Marino Marini Museum, Piazza San Pancrazio, Florence (Italy). Open every day (except Wednesday) from 10.00 to 19.00.

For more info: [www.museomarinomarini.it](http://www.museomarinomarini.it)



### The eruption of the Lewotobi volcano in Flores, Indonesia

*Fundraising for displaced people*



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At least 10 thousand people were affected by the eruption of the Lekotobi volcano, in the area of Flores Timur (Indonesia), which occurred shortly after midnight on the 4th November 2024: the local disaster management agency reports that at the moment there are 10 victims, but that the real estimate of the effects of the eruption is not yet known. The lava material, in fact, arrived 6 kilometers away from the crater, covering and destroying houses, villages, cities, and forcing the inhabitants to flee.

Amongst the confirmed victims is also a Sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart: their Motherhouse, as well as the Minor Seminary of the Diocese of Larantuka and many homes, were overwhelmed by lava in the middle of the night, triggering devastating fires that forced the residents to flee, now housed in rescue centers far from the volcano.

Improvised shelters, tents, but also churches and convents: it is here that the OFM is working alongside the displaced population by involving the entire Franciscan Family in the area. The friars and the JPIC Office of the Province of St. Michael the Archangel of Indonesia are engaged in humanitarian activities of relief and aid to the victims, coordinating the joint effort of brothers and sisters of the entire Franciscan Family of Flores.



Assistance to displaced persons and supply of basic necessities (drinking water, food, tents, clothing, medicines) to people who have lost everything: according to reports from the Minister Provincial, Br. Mikhael Peruhe OFM, after this first moment of response to the emergency in the short term, we will move on to a second phase of reconstruction, in the long term, to help the population restore normal living conditions.

To this end, we ask women and men of good will to join the fundraising campaign promoted by the OFM Fraternitas Foundation to help the victims of the eruption of the Lemotolobi volcano.

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# OFM

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